THE CHRISTIAN RADICAL
CATHOLIC WORKER,
VANCOUVER BC CANADA
TO:

THE CHRISTIAN RADICAL
A JOURNAL OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT
VOL. 2 NUMBER 4
FEBRUARY 2007
$0.00 (FREE!)

CONTENTS:

-A HAGIOGRAPHY AGAINST SCHISM,
BY CHRIS ROONEY

- THE CATHOLIC WORKER: SCHOOL(S) FOR LIVING,
BY ERIC ANGLADA

-WETLANDS RESTORATION, BY ALEX IWASA

-THE D.R.I.V.E. MANIFESTO, BY STEVEN WOODS

-WHY WE ARE WALKING,
BY BROTHER RAYMOND SCHWAB

-ANGOLA, BY DAVID ESAU

-VOW OF NONVIOLENCE, BY FR. JOHN DEAR

-WE BELIEVE SO WE SPEAK

-PHOTO CREDITS GO TO JOSINA DE BREE, MIKE HASTIE, JOY ELLISON, LOGAN LAITURI, DAVID ESAU, AND ADAM CHRISTIAN ROBERTSON

-SPECIAL THANKS TO THE OLYMPIA CATHOLIC WORKER, THE PORTLAND CATHOLIC WORKER, STEVEN WOODS, JAMES MULLIN, DAVE DEWARD, AND ST. NINA'S ORTHODOX MISSION.

Useful links and places:

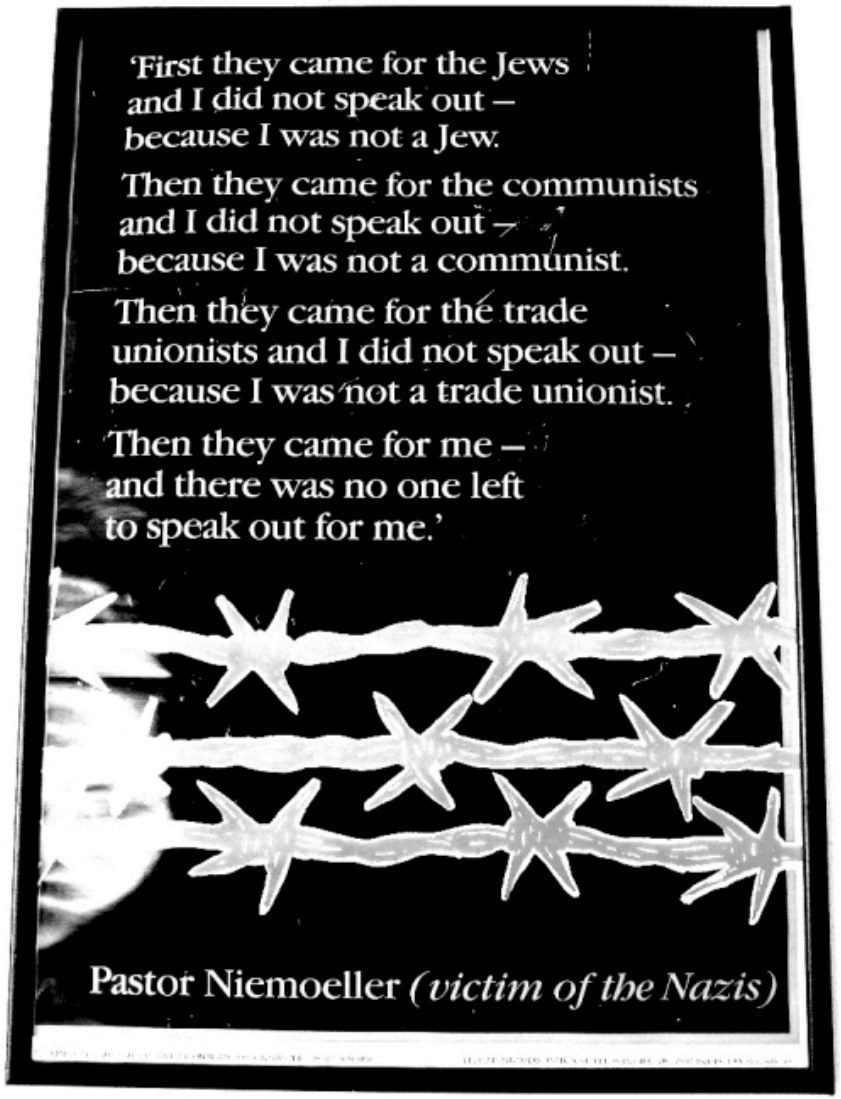
-Catholic Worker Websites:
www.catholicworker.com
www.catholicworker.org
www.lacatholicworker.org
www.ca.geocities.com/vancouvercatholicworker
www.catholicworker.com/bookstore/index.html

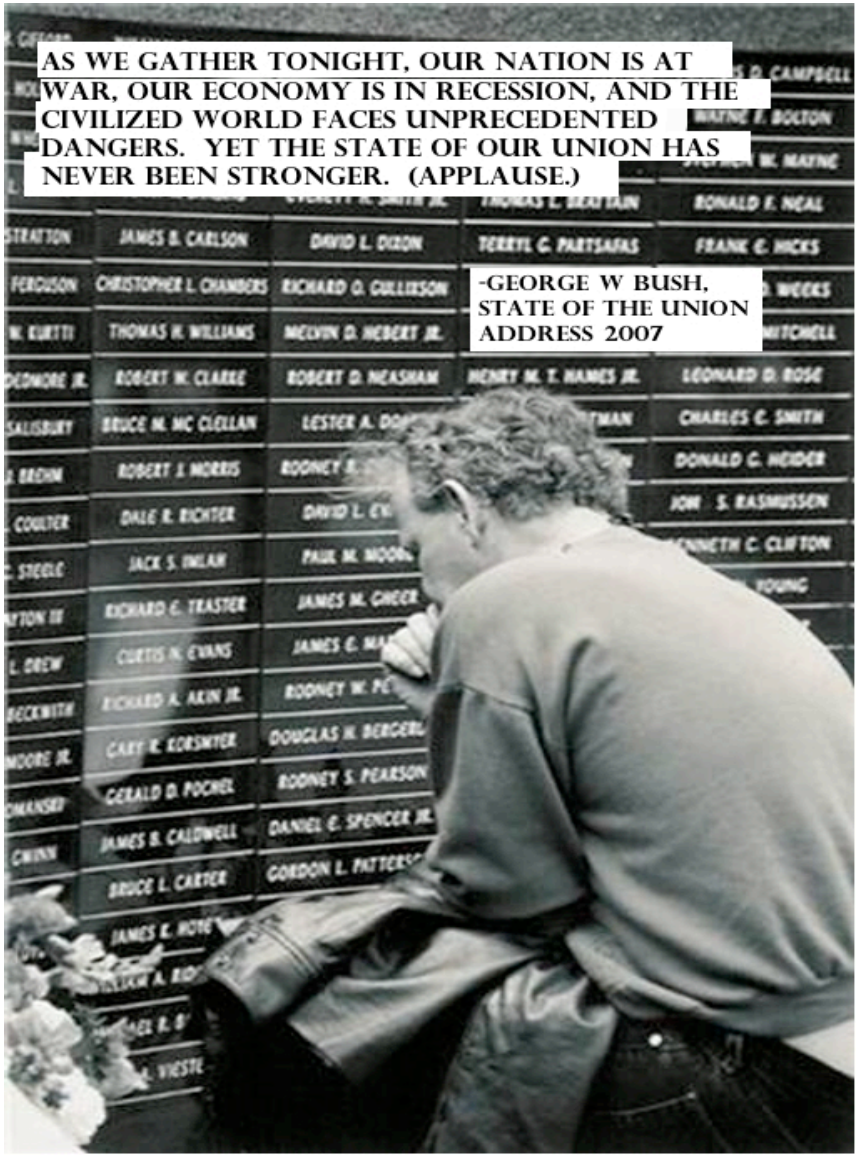
-Radical/Progressive Christianity
www.jesusradicals.org
www.nonviolentjesus.blogspot.com
www.geezmagazine.org
www.catholicanarchy.org
www.anglocatholicsocialism.org
www.tierra-nueva.org
www.romancatholicwomenpriests.com
www.desertwisdom.org/dttw

-Anti-War
www.stopwar.ca
www.ivaw.net
www.serve.com/nukeresister
www.resisters.ca
www.wri-irg.org
www.plowsharesactions.org

-Activism
www.foodnotbombs.net
www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook
www.iww.org
www.deathpenalty.org
www.freegan.info/?page=home
www.justicia4migrantworkers.org

-Other Good Websites:
www.vancouverdiy.com
www.pcac.net/indexn.html *(Palestinian Child Arts Centre)*
www.southcentralfarmers.com
www.commongroundrelief.org
www.teachingforpeace,org
www.jonahhouse.org


'First they came for the Jews
and I did not speak out –
because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the communists
and I did not speak out –
because I was not a communist.
Then they came for the trade
unionists and I did not speak out –
because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for me –
and there was no one left
to speak out for me.'
Pastor Niemoeller (victim of the Nazis)


AS WE GATHER TONIGHT, OUR NATION IS AT WAR, OUR ECONOMY IS IN RECESSION, AND THE CIVILIZED WORLD FACES UNPRECEDENTED DANGERS. YET THE STATE OF OUR UNION HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER. (APPLAUSE.)
-GEORGE W BUSH, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS 2007

St. Peter The Aleut, Martyr of San Francisco
A Hagiography Against the Schism

By Chris Rooney, with help from wikipedia.org

Some weeks ago I was visiting the home of an Orthodox friend of mine, he recently had the internet restored at his place and as we sat in front of his computer he decided to look up some of the Orthodox Saints of America.

Few western Christians know anything at all about the Eastern Orthodox Church and less still about its first missions to Alaska. The Russian Orthodox Church had a mission on Kodiak Island in Alaska long before the Americans bought that part of the world, and in contrast to their western cousins who often resorted to ridicule and force to gain converts, these Orthodox missionaries spread the Gospel through demonstrating to the local indigenous peoples that the coming of Christ had fulfilled their ancient religions rather than arbitrarily destroying them.

Amongst the first peoples of the North to become converts to Orthodoxy were the Aleuts. The Aleut people were excellent craftspeople and well skilled in hunting and boat making. One of the first Aleut converts was a man named Cungagnaq, Baptised, Chrismated and given the Christian name of Peter. Peter had lived on Kodiak Island and would have had St. Herman of Alaska as one of his instructors in the faith.

In the early part of the 19th century Russia had set up trading posts along the Pacific Coast and into Northern California. The Russian fur traders would hire Aleut hunters to run seal and otter pelts between Alaska and Fort Ross in Northern California. In 1815 Peter and some of his fellow hunters were taking a shipment of pelts down the coast when they were captured by the Spanish and taken to San Francisco for interrogation—The Spaniards believed them to be part of the first wave of a Russian invasion into Spanish territory.

The Aleut hunting party was handed over to the priests at the Roman Catholic mission for questioning. Peter was the first to be put to the question by his interrogators who tried to force him to renounce the Orthodox faith, he and his friends were threatened with torture and called heretics and schismatic. When the Aleuts refused, the inquisitor had a toe severed from each of Peter's feet.

Peter still refused to renounce his faith and the Spanish priest ordered a group of California Indians to cut off each finger of Peter's hands, one joint at a time, finally removing both his hands. They eventually disemboweled him, crowning his life with the gift of martyrdom. They were about to torture the next Aleut when orders were received to release them.

Upon hearing the report of Peter's death, St. Herman back on Kodiak Island was moved to cry out, "Holy new-martyr Peter, pray to God for us!" Peter the Aleut was formally declared a Saint as the "Martyr of San Francisco" in 1980. His feast day is commemorated in the Orthodox faith on September 24. He is one of the first Orthodox Martyrs in America.

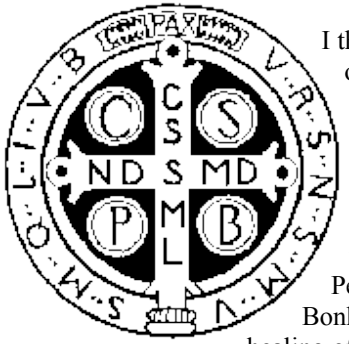
Since first reading about St Peter the Aleut I have found myself coming back to the story of his martyrdom quite frequently. As I read that night at my friend's house it was recounted that throughout the whole torture session he was heard to proclaim that he was a Christian just like his interrogators and that it was with the name of our Lord on his lips that he died.

The list of Christians martyred by other Christians is a long and sorrowful one, yet it is as a Catholic that I have found myself drawn to the story of this Martyr of San Francisco. It seems strange to think of the murder of this obscure Aleut seal hunter as a story in defiance of the schism but it is in this spirit that I read and remember it. The rift between the Orthodox and Catholic Church has been going on for over one thousand years and what began, as a simple dispute over the correct wording of the Nicene Creed, has become one of the longest, bitterest fallings out in history.

It could be observed in many ways that the actions of this schism have echoed throughout Christian history, the pope's decision to excommunicate Constantinople over the wording of the creed began a very long series of events resulting in everything from the Reformation to the declarations of papal infallibility and the new dogma of the immaculate conception (not to be confused with the virgin birth of Christ).

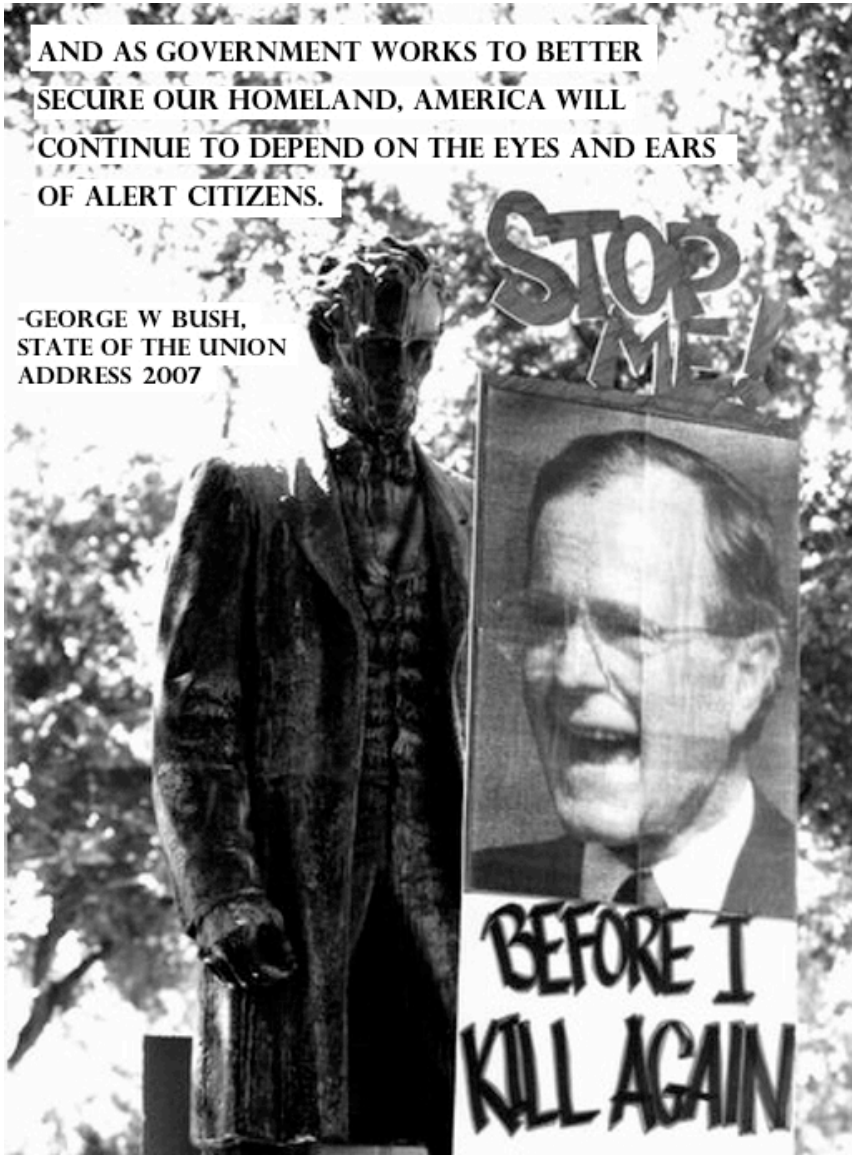
The persecutions, executions, and mass excommunications, which occurred throughout this history, all the atrocities of the inquisitions and the imperial designs of the papacy could be seen to have their roots in that first excommunication of the East by Rome. From that first break with the East a pattern of behaviour was set in motion, a pattern hostile to communication, dialogue, and closed on both sides to differing ideas.

For the first couple of centuries the schism was thought to be temporary by both sides, but as time elapsed the rift widened and the West drifted farther into heterodoxy and eventually into error. In the East the Schism has also had it's effects, while the structure and practice of Orthodox Christianity has remained the same in an unbroken line that goes back to the early fathers there is bitterness, cynicism, and at times even an outright resentment or rivalry between East and West. And it is this ancient and petty argument, which has made many of the world's conflicts possible.



I think though that despite the hurt, and the traditions of animosity or separation, God knows us all as one flock. I know from the little reading I have yet done on the subject that the Holy Saints and Martyrs of the Orthodox faith are no less dear to God's heart than they are to millions of Christians, and I believe that it is in this un-fractured cloud of witnesses that martyrs like St. Peter the Aleut, The Holy Martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and St. Oscar Romero pray together for the healing of the church and the re-unification of all Christians; not as Roman or Orthodox or Protestant but simply and visibly as the body of Christ, a spiritual reality and mystery of the faith made evident on earth by our one baptism and our common salvation won by Christ for everyone, not just for Russians or Romans or Presbyterians but for all who believe in his name.

Saint Peter the Aleut, Martyred by Christians pray for us and for the healing of God's Church. **Amen. <**


AND AS GOVERNMENT WORKS TO BETTER SECURE OUR HOMELAND, AMERICA WILL CONTINUE TO DEPEND ON THE EYES AND EARS OF ALERT CITIZENS.
-GEORGE W BUSH, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS 2007
STOP ME!
BEFORE I KILL AGAIN

The Catholic Worker: School(s) for Living

by Eric Anglada

"Nothing can take the place of thoughts. If we do not think, we cannot act freely. If we do not act freely, we are at the mercy of forces which we never understand, forces which are arbitrary, destructive, blind, fatal to us and to our world." –Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* p. 79

"So what should we do if we can't look to the self-styled revolutionaries and the establishment progressives? Thoreau's suggestion should still be ours: a return to the fundamentals of being human." –Curtis White, "The Spirit of Disobedience" (Harpers 4/06)

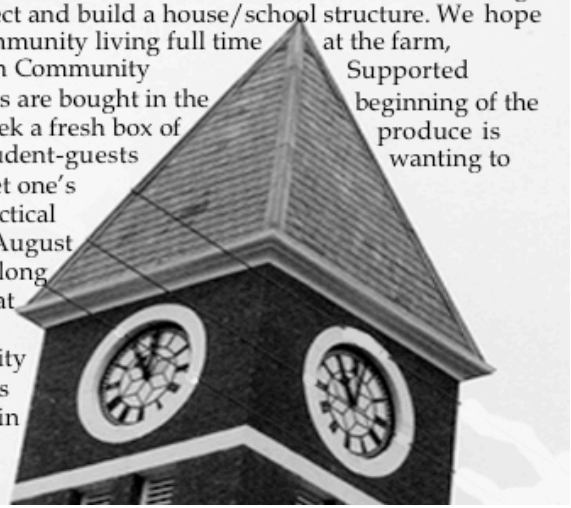
Eight years ago, at the age of nineteen, I was traveling the country in an attempt to see the underside of America when a man in a Phoenix homeless shelter suggested I check out the Catholic Worker. Two months later I was standing in Solidarity House, the Catholic Worker House in Baton Rouge, Louisiana amazed that I had discovered what I wanted to do: live simply, in community, committed to the adventure of a spiritual search, while seeking out solidarity with the poor. Five years later, after a year at St. Jude Catholic Worker in Champaign, Illinois, I wrote an essay mentioning that the Catholic Worker is a "school" of sorts. Now, as I begin the next step of my journey, a Catholic Worker School is still very much on my mind.

During my freshman year at college – appropriately enough, at The Catholic University of America - I picked up Dorothy Day's classic autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*. Even though it has been over 25 years since her death, her writing, passion and practice continue to inspire those seeking an authentic expression of the Gospels. Dorothy was the writer, the personality, and the one who lived nearly fifty years at the Catholic Worker in the Lower East Side of New York City. With most of the over 180 houses of the movement existing as urban soup kitchens and houses of hospitality, her influence is still prevalent.

There are perhaps a dozen farms that exist as expressions of Peter Maurin's vision within the CW movement. Peter died thirty years earlier than Dorothy, he spoke in a thick French accent, and never wrote a book. And yet it was Peter, as Dorothy readily admitted, who was really the founder of the movement. What he sought was an agronomic university, or a Catholic Worker School. Every house, each in a different way, exists as a school. But so far as I know, no house has consciously built a school that seeks not only to farm but educate ourselves and others.

In a conversation with a friend last spring I stumbled upon an idea I had a few years ago about creating a center for radical discipleship in a rural setting. His excitement at the idea gave me enough inspiration to begin thinking and discussing possibilities. This past fall, at the annual Midwest Catholic Worker gathering, two other friends and I explored the idea further in a roundtable discussion. A couple - Mary Moody and Rick Mihm - were there from Dubuque, Iowa. And they were intrigued enough by the idea that they began discussing what it would mean to do this with their own community. After the national CW gathering, I had a chance to explore what this novel attempt might look like. With a large and open house downtown, as well as a 33-acre farm, Dubuque seems like a dream come true.

The plan is to live at the downtown Catholic Worker House there to begin raising funds for the project and build a house/school structure. We hope to have an intentional community living full time at the farm, supporting ourselves with Community Supported Agriculture – where shares are bought in the beginning of the season and then every week a fresh box of produce is delivered – and to host student-guests wanting to learn theory but also to get one's hands dirty and learn practical skills by early 2008. This August we will host a full month-long trial session of the school at the house downtown. We hope to build a community of worker-scholars for this short time in order to begin embodying this vision.



In the 75 years since Dorothy and Peter started the CW, much has changed. Even since Dorothy's death in 1980 the nature of poverty has undergone a vast change. More than that, however, capitalism, the State – in short, the Domination System – work in hidden and subtle ways that we need to take time to look at, study, discuss and, most importantly, *resist*. Study and analysis are more important than ever.

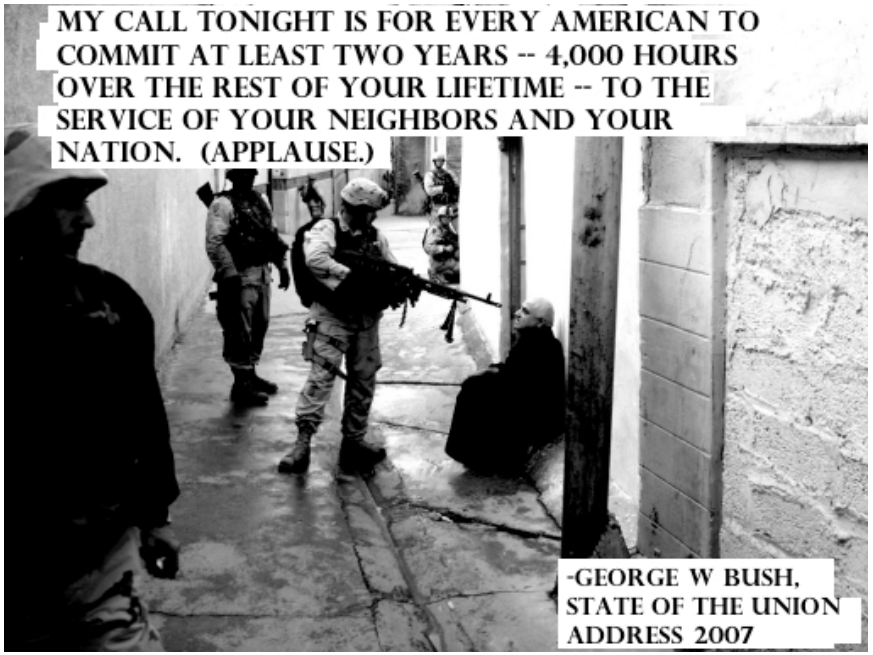
During my four years in the Catholic Worker movement I've thought much about alienation and its relation to work. Our guests, without skills or college degrees, have had to find low-paying jobs at the sacrifice of dignity. I too have periodically worked jobs - such as housekeeping - where I often felt something other than human. Finding meaningful labor is difficult. For the past several years I have dreamt of the "worker-scholar," someone who spends their time making a living with the work of their own hands, while also making room for reading, thought, prayer and discussion. Our culture's obsession with speed and busyness distracts us from these things that are central in living a whole life.

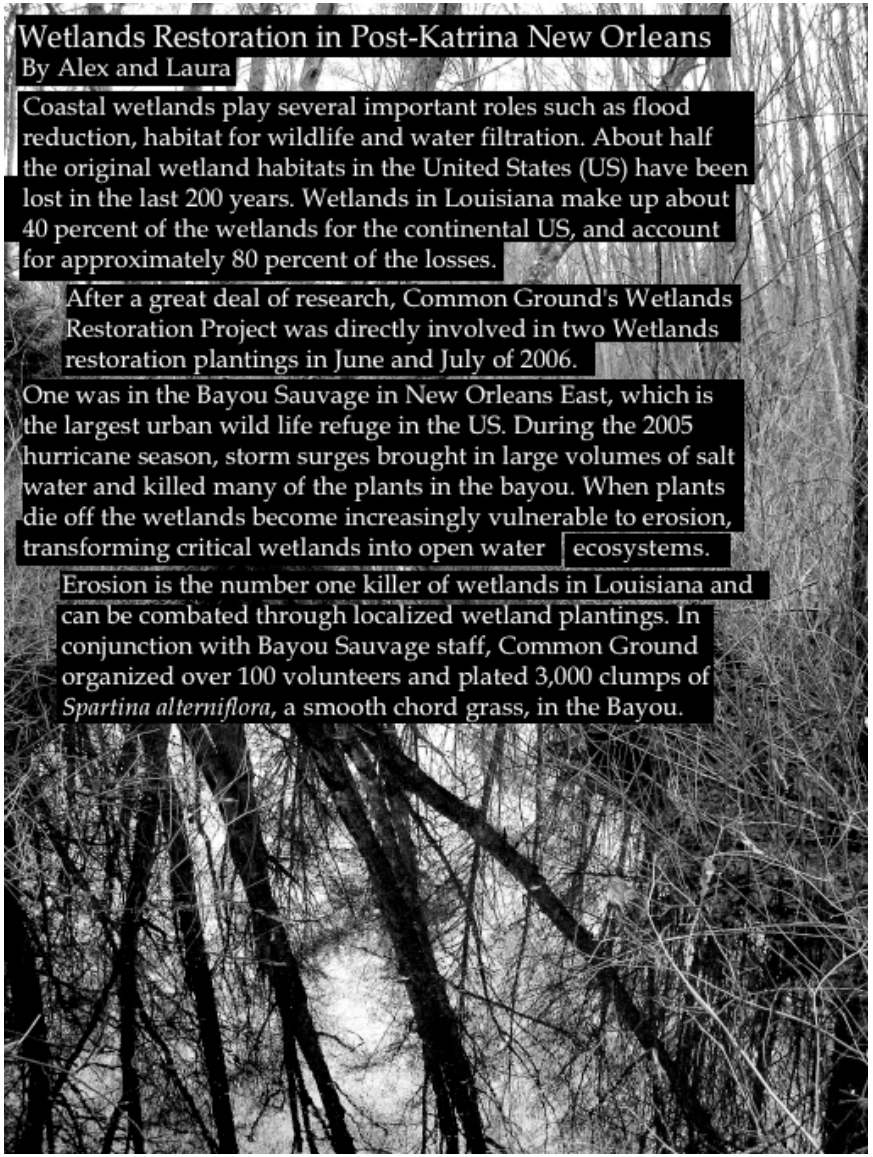
The idea of starting a Catholic Worker School is an experiment, an attempt at the fundamentals of life: a re-imagining of our relationship to work, study and the Good Life. Massive institutions of education are adept at churning out young men and women who are heavily indebt, lacking the basic knowledge of living. I often say that my real education began in the Catholic Worker. A different relationship to education - away from its academic guise - is necessary to help bring about a revolution of the heart and, by extension, our culture.

Although I found reading St. Therese of Liseux's autobiography hard to read because of its sentimentality, I find her essential insight into the "little way" to be profoundly relevant, especially as I see how the Catholic Worker in Champaign is run, with its soup kitchen feeding over 50 folks daily with a dozen workers and guests living in the same house. What I need is to carve out a lifestyle that is sustainable -emotionally, spiritually and physically - over the long haul. The burnout rate amongst the urban house of hospitality model illustrates this.

The move to Dubuque is my effort towards continuing solidarity with the marginalized: I will have a chance to work in their house of hospitality, but I also see working with the poor as an active care of the earth. Ecological living is equally necessary, perhaps even more so in this day and age, as hospitality for the homeless. And it doesn't have to be big – Jesus' metaphors of salt and leaven to describe the Kingdom of God should convince us of that much.

If anyone is interested in finding out more about this idea of a Catholic Worker School, we have set up an email – CatholicWorkerSchool@gmail.com – for discussion. We are not intending to create a new orthodoxy of people to believe in, but a practice to integrate and deepen our lives, and to help move the Catholic Worker movement into the new complexities of the 21st century. <

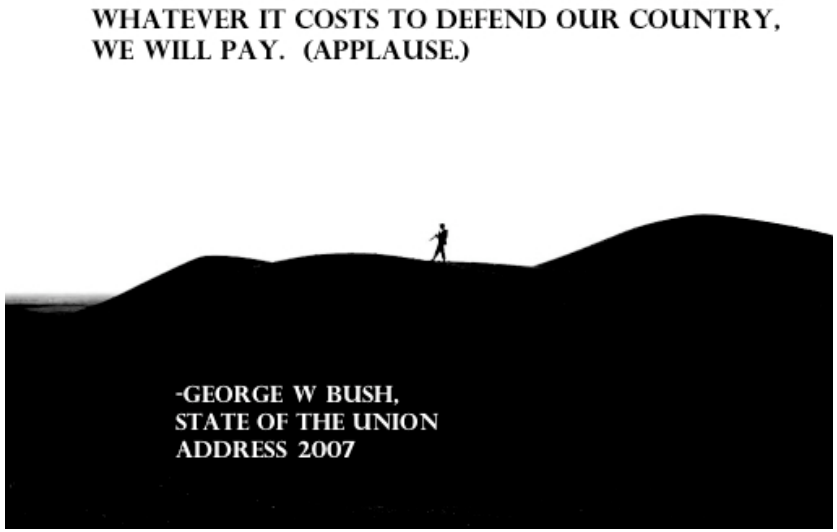

MY CALL TONIGHT IS FOR EVERY AMERICAN TO COMMIT AT LEAST TWO YEARS -- 4,000 HOURS OVER THE REST OF YOUR LIFETIME -- TO THE SERVICE OF YOUR NEIGHBORS AND YOUR NATION. (APPLAUSE.)
-GEORGE W BUSH, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS 2007

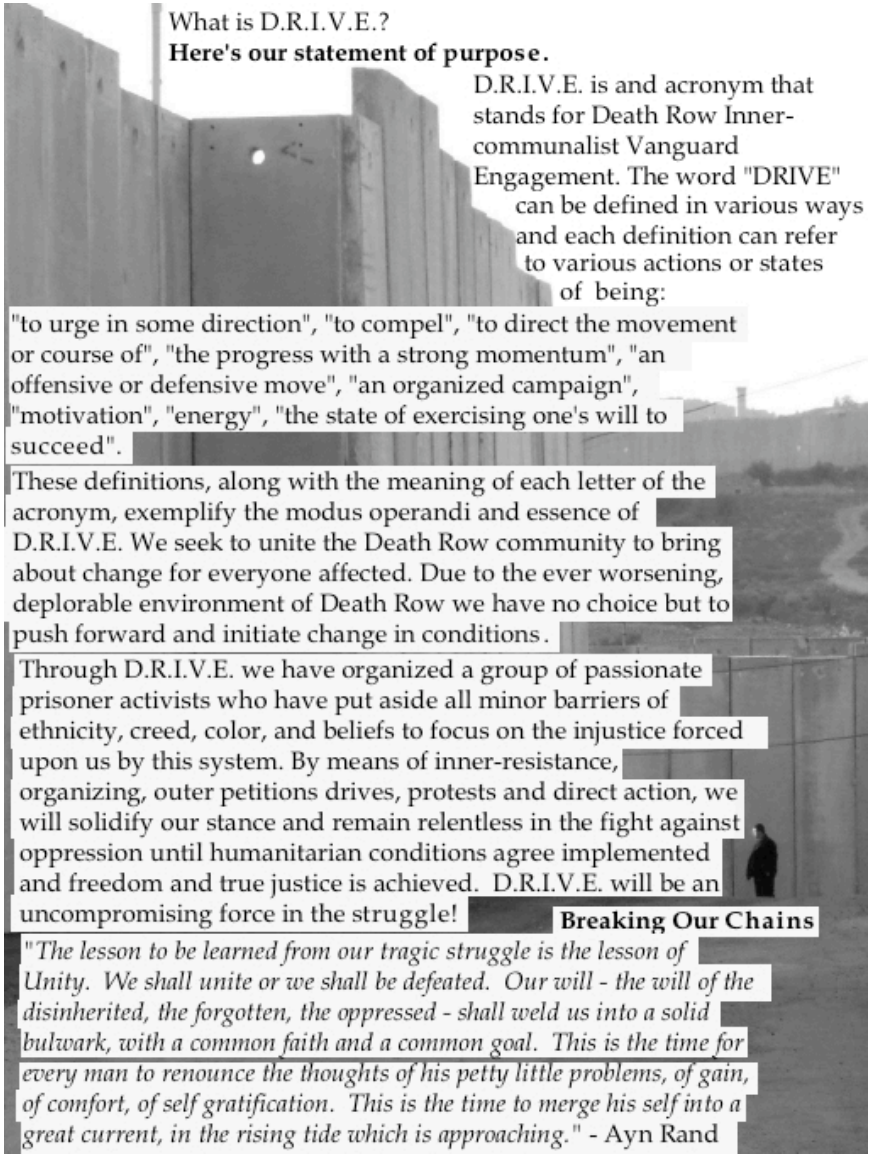

Wetlands Restoration in Post-Katrina New Orleans
By Alex and Laura
Coastal wetlands play several important roles such as flood reduction, habitat for wildlife and water filtration. About half the original wetland habitats in the United States (US) have been lost in the last 200 years. Wetlands in Louisiana make up about 40 percent of the wetlands for the continental US, and account for approximately 80 percent of the losses.
After a great deal of research, Common Ground's Wetlands Restoration Project was directly involved in two Wetlands restoration plantings in June and July of 2006.
One was in the Bayou Sauvage in New Orleans East, which is the largest urban wild life refuge in the US. During the 2005 hurricane season, storm surges brought in large volumes of salt water and killed many of the plants in the bayou. When plants die off the wetlands become increasingly vulnerable to erosion, transforming critical wetlands into open water ecosystems.
Erosion is the number one killer of wetlands in Louisiana and can be combated through localized wetland plantings. In conjunction with Bayou Sauvage staff, Common Ground organized over 100 volunteers and plated 3,000 clumps of *Spartina alterniflora*, a smooth chord grass, in the Bayou.

Common Ground also assisted the Katrina Agriculture and Wetlands Restoration Experience (KARE) plant *Spartina alterniflora*, irises, and bulrush in Bayou Metairie at the City Park. Volunteers removed invasive species from the banks and replaced them with hardy native vegetation, and pulled out large cypress trees from the waters that were blown down during the storm.

The last four months have been spent on educational outreach via a slide show on the project, working on a video about the project and research for grants. In the upcoming months the project hopes to complete the video and include it in a national mailing to educate individuals from around the U.S on wetlands issues in New Orleans. Grants are being written primarily to purchase water quality testing equipment for lab work in local high school with water taken from the Bayou Sauvage. This will help to spread awareness and spark interest in wetlands concerns in the youth of New Orleans.

For more information you can contact Laura at commonwetland@gmail.com or 201-739-6341. <




What is D.R.I.V.E.?
Here's our statement of purpose.
D.R.I.V.E. is and acronym that stands for Death Row Inner-communalist Vanguard Engagement. The word "DRIVE" can be defined in various ways and each definition can refer to various actions or states of being:
"to urge in some direction", "to compel", "to direct the movement or course of", "the progress with a strong momentum", "an offensive or defensive move", "an organized campaign", "motivation", "energy", "the state of exercising one's will to succeed".
These definitions, along with the meaning of each letter of the acronym, exemplify the modus operandi and essence of D.R.I.V.E. We seek to unite the Death Row community to bring about change for everyone affected. Due to the ever worsening, deplorable environment of Death Row we have no choice but to push forward and initiate change in conditions.
Through D.R.I.V.E. we have organized a group of passionate prisoner activists who have put aside all minor barriers of ethnicity, creed, color, and beliefs to focus on the injustice forced upon us by this system. By means of inner-resistance, organizing, outer petitions drives, protests and direct action, we will solidify our stance and remain relentless in the fight against oppression until humanitarian conditions agree implemented and freedom and true justice is achieved. D.R.I.V.E. will be an uncompromising force in the struggle!
Breaking Our Chains
"The lesson to be learned from our tragic struggle is the lesson of Unity. We shall unite or we shall be defeated. Our will - the will of the disinherited, the forgotten, the oppressed - shall weld us into a solid bulwark, with a common faith and a common goal. This is the time for every man to renounce the thoughts of his petty little problems, of gain, of comfort, of self gratification. This is the time to merge his self into a great current, in the rising tide which is approaching." - Ayn Rand

It's a sick, sad world. People are so brainwashed all their lives by the soul hungry capitalist swine who control "our" country, that even when a catalyst occurs that should shake them out of their torpor, most just quietly crawl deeper into the belly of the beast. What's the name of that psychosis where a hostage begins to idolize their captor? Oh, I forget but I'm sure you know that I'm referring to. I've read all about the sociological reasoning behind complacency my fellows exhibit but knowing and seeing it first hand is two completely different things. The situation here at the Polunsky Death Camp is totally out of whack. Actually witnessing the behavior of my fellows only proves to me how sick and deadly society's manipulators really are. It is what's driven me to fight them with all of my being. I've been on death row for years and I see the capitulation each and every day. But I refuse to allow myself to be led into the complacent, subjugated existence most of my peers resign themselves to. And I refuse also to allow my fellows that luxury either. Not while the establishment is trying to sell our humanity and our lives! Trying to conquer and control us in the name of justice and the pursuit of freedom and democracy. But honestly, they're just out for a chance to make a profit. Well, its my goal, and that of my comrades, to make that attempted acquisition very unprofitable.

One of the Prison Industrial Complex's (PIC) main tactics used to sustain their operation is to foster a complete and total reliance of the P.I.C. in their captives. The environment we live in, the indoctrination we've been receiving since childhood, and the establishments decades of experience in dehumanizing and breaking people often lead to this reliance quickly and harshly. But sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes, for what ever reason, with certain people, the prison system fails at it's modus operandi. And that's where we of the D.R.I.V.E. Movement come in. One of D.R.I.V.E.'s main goals is to show our fellow captives that it's right for them to rely on themselves. We strive to embolden our peers to take back control of their humanity and their lives. To see themselves for who they are and to see the Machine for what it truly is. We do this by giving ourselves as an example. Through our dedication to non-violent struggle to better our lives, the D.R.I.V.E. Movement serves to offer a model for ALL prisoners to help guide them to freedom from our oppressors chains. By seeing that we rebuke our masters, refusing to be as slaves, we hope to have our fellows follow in our footsteps and do the same. We believe that once enough of us are liberated the P.I.C. will begin to crumble.

This is our ultimate goal. To achieve this goal we encourage all fellows to join with us in dissension, disobedience, and disruption of the prison system.

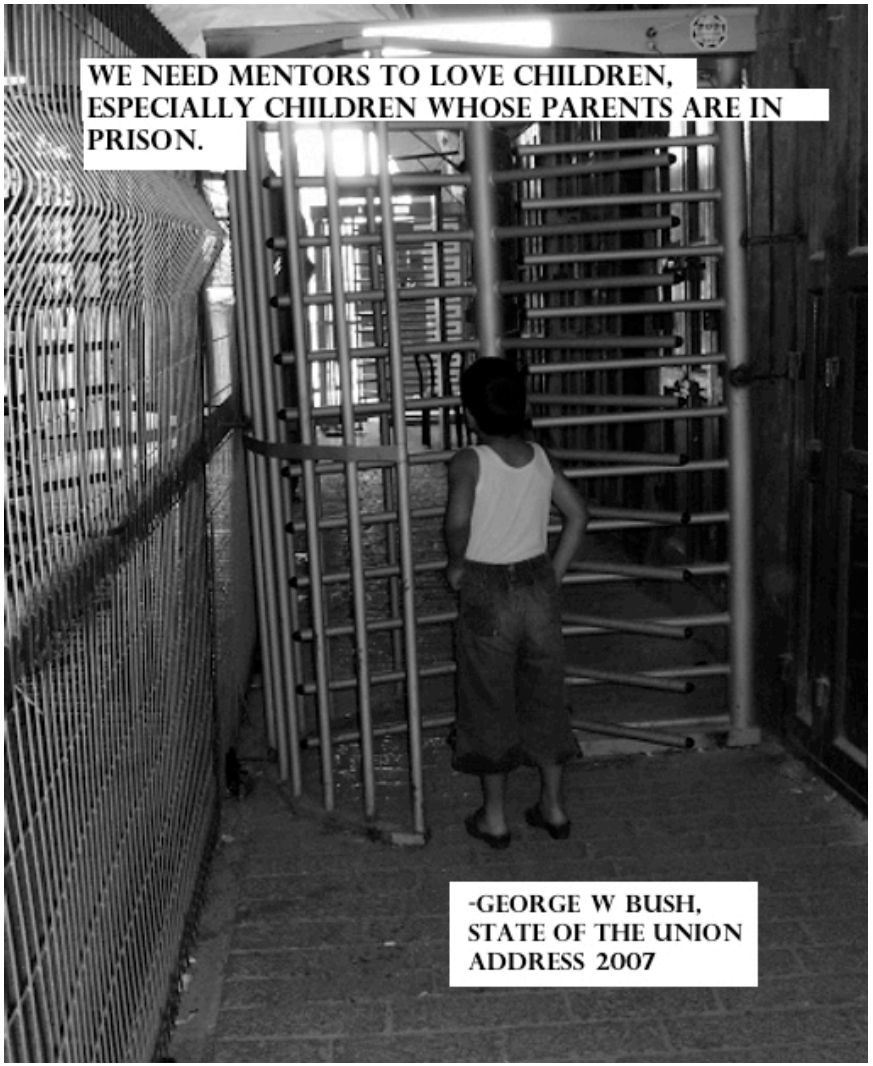
Dissension is the first step towards the reclamation of our humanity and, thusly, the most important. Before anyone can attempt to take back any of what this establishment has stolen from them. They have to first see our situation clearly and how that the establishment is in the wrong. That's why we try to impress upon our fellows the amount of control and contempt the Prison Industrial Complex has over our lives. That to the Machine, we are naught but numbers behind a dollar sign. As we begin to awaken though, we start to question ourselves and each other about our plight. To really start looking around and taking notice of all the little details we normally skipped over in our ignorance. Once our eyes are fully opened a desire is often ignited in our hearts for something to be done for some kind of change. At once we feel the helplessness and frustration from our lack of control. It is at this most crucial moment that the D.R.I.V.E. Movement is given it's most important duty: to provide a structure and an outlet for our frustration and indignation, and to empower our peers to begin to take action. The bridge from awareness to action is crossed when our fellows begin to raise their voices with us and seeing that that's not enough, when they start to disobey the will of the captors.

Actually stepping up from dissension to disobedience is probably the hardest step for us our fellows to take. To actively fight against one of the most repressive bodies of power in the world is a daunting prospect, believe me! It is a great deal easier to talk about then to do. That's why it's so important for us and the D.R.I.V.E. Movement to make the struggle a prominent part of our daily lives. I refuse to obey my captors to show my peers that it is good and right to do so, and that it can actually be done. Of course, the powers that be attempt to crush me under their heel in an attempt to restore an air of subjugation; but my resolve and unwillingness to submit even in the face of oppression and tyranny show my fellows that the prison system is not as all powerful as it projects itself to be. This severely undermines the Prison Industrial Complex's hold on our leash, and has been proven to encourage my fellows to act similarly. The modicum of control the system loses from our disobedience often throws the establishment into a frenzy. Our captors lash out in an attempt to restore order. This backfires on them though because they generally resort to violence in an attempt to quell our rebelliousness.

This overly harsh approach to suppress our peaceful actions often result in a better understanding of us from the outside world and is the first nail in the establishment's coffin.

From disobedience, it is but a short step to actually disrupting the operations of the Prison Industrial Complex. It is a necessary step if we hope to drive the Machine to its knees and take back what is rightfully ours. The best way for slaves to deny their masters is open revolt, and in this regard, we of D.R.I.V.E. encourage any type of non-violent disruptive action. We know of and utilize several different methods of resistance in our struggle here on the Polunsky Unit. While we've found that though any resistance to the system is beneficial to our cause, it is mostly through outright defiance of the procedures required to maintain order inside the Prison Industrial Complex that have the highest effect. The prison system rightly facing their loss of control will increase their repressive and violent tactics to try and suppress our actions. This has several adverse effects, as they begin to offer concessions to get us to give up. If we capitulate, disband the movement, they will halt their violence and we remain slaves. Yet, if we persevere, keep up the pressure and stare down the juggernaut bearing down upon us without wavering, we know we can win. Therefore it is essential we unite with our fellows and present a solid front to our captors. Solidarity and steadfastness must become our only answer to the establishment's wrath. We must refuse to give in, to give up. In so doing we will tear down the Machine. This is our purpose, and we have the will, determination, and wherewithal to see it through.

In Strength, In Struggle, In Solidarity
Steven Woods
Polunsky Death Camp


WE NEED MENTORS TO LOVE CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS ARE IN PRISON.
-GEORGE W BUSH, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS 2007

Why We Are Walking

December 2nd, 2006
By Brother Raymond Schwab

In February, 2007 Elliott Nesch and Raymond Schwab are walking from Denver Colorado to Washington D.C. This March for Truth is based on:

The truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need for all people to repent and turn to the Lord that healing may come to our nation. We must be a country, which embraces justice, righteousness, and truth, and be vigilant in the responsibility of preserving the American Republic from apathy, tyranny, and immorality.

The truth of the poor testimony of the Evangelical church in America who when surveyed was listed as the number one supporter of the war in Iraq and illegal practices and policies of the Bush administration without debate, reservation or caution. Not only has the church failed to be the voice of truth and reason but has sent its sons and daughters to be soldiers of this secular battle rather than supporting the widow and orphan, building the church in Iraq, preaching the gospel of peace, holding our government to righteous standards, and holding the President accountable for his behaviour since he claims to be a born again Christian. This blind loyalty is not only dangerous, but it is also a blot on the name of Christ and his testimony to the nations affected by our countries poor domestic and foreign polices post- 911.

The truth of the unanswered questions surrounding the terrorist attacks on 9/11 2001. More and more contrary facts have emerged, challenging the official story, from reputable scientist, scholars, and government officials. These unanswered questions, such as what happened to building seven, are critical due to the fact that 911 was the pretext for the current conflict in both Afghanistan and Iraq. We ask for a new independent council to be demanded by the Congress and for the church to not hide its head in the sand concerning these matters since we are lovers of truth, no matter what the cost. History has shown what happens when the church becomes blind to government atrocities and propaganda.

Evangelicals should be ashamed of their leader's war cries. We desire to discuss/ debate this issue in the churches and cities through which we travel on the way to Washington. We will present a petition of Grievances to the President of the United States and ask for a clear plan of withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan as well as his resignation as we withdraw our support since he has failed to do his job. We will rally in the state Capitols of Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, and Pennsylvania seeking Congress to exercise its separation of power in demanding a clear plan of withdraw in the middle east, assigning a truly independent council to investigate the unanswered questions surrounding 9-11, and hold the executive branch responsible for flagrant and wanton violations of the Geneva Convention, International Law, The Bill of Rights, and criminal law. This is not a partisan issue. It is about the integrity of the American people. It is about the truth.

If you are interested in supporting this historical march financially, or logistically we have many needs, if you would like to donate financially to the walk you can do so through the website **www.beitshalomministries.org,** by ordering a copy of the newly released documentary: *Iraq The Death Of Reason* from the same website, or by writing to
Brother Raymond: raymond@beitshalomministries.org
Brother Elliott: elliott@beitshalomministries.org <

Experiences from Angola

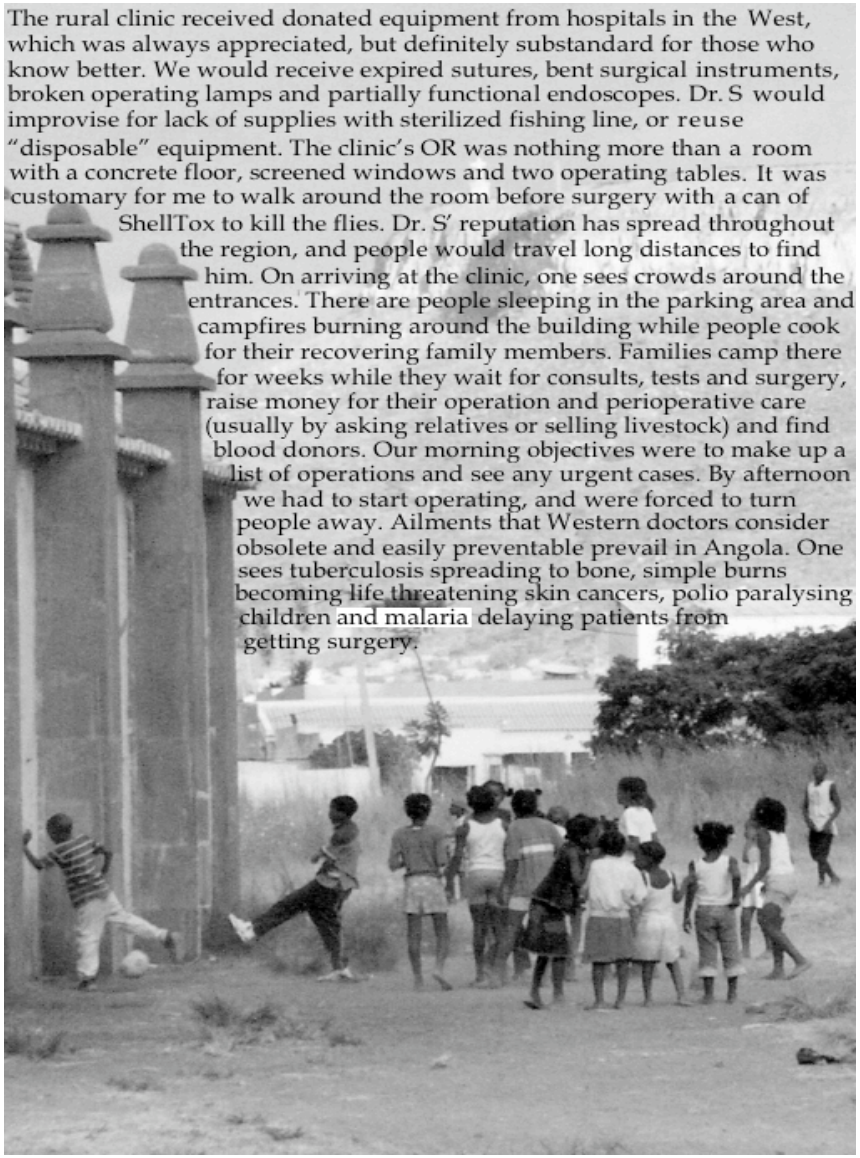
By David Esau

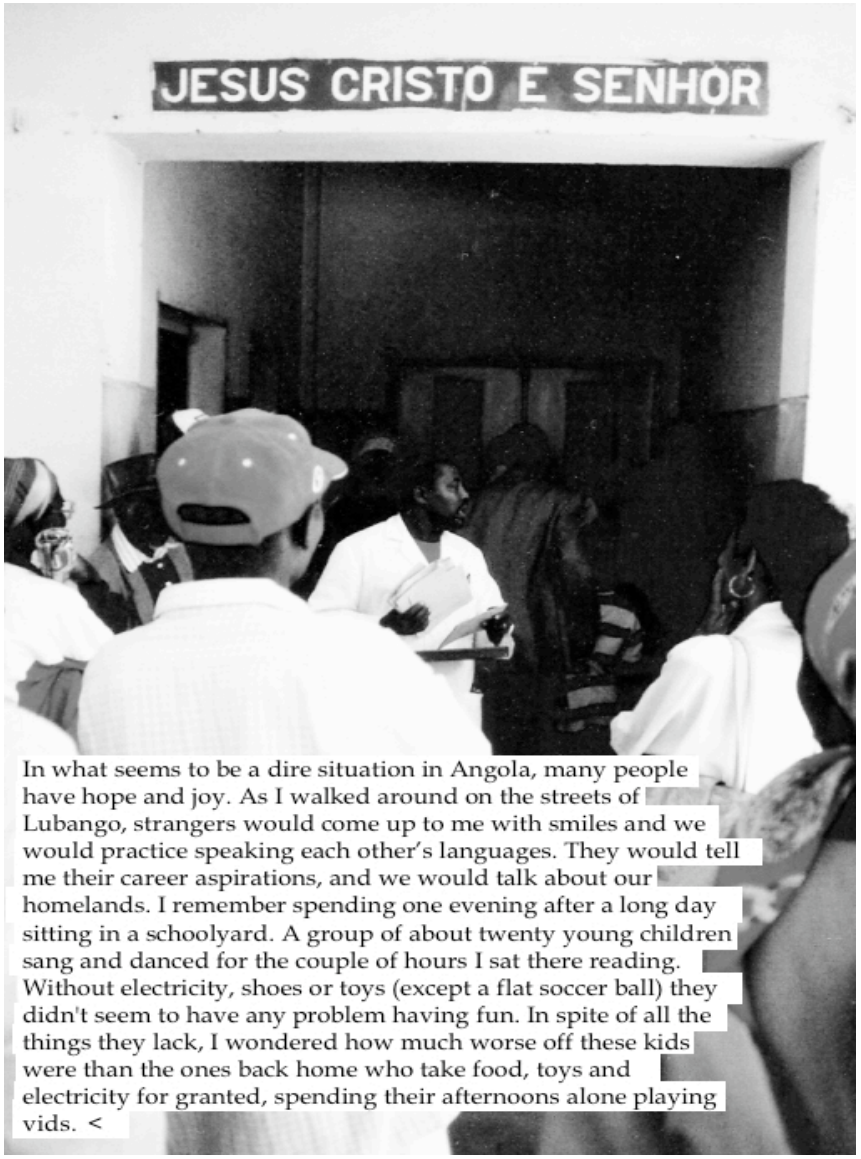
Three years ago to the day, I left for Angola, a little known country in south western Africa. I spent two months there with a doctor to learn about practicing medicine in developing countries and to help in whatever way I could. As a premedical student with nothing more than an undergraduate science degree, there wasn't much that I was able to do to improve Angolans' lives, and I realized as I was leaving how my experience was so much more for my benefit than for theirs. In a culture where poverty and illness is the norm, people who had so little were still full of love and generosity in ways that we as Westerners cannot understand. While people of any profession can do a lot to help our brothers and sisters in Africa, I realized that we have so much to learn from them. I am indebted to those people who shared their stories and their suffering with me, and I hope to return some day to help them in a meaningful way. In the meantime, what I *can* do is bear witness.

Angola doesn't get much attention in the press. It is one of the many African nations that gained independence from European colonization in the seventies, only to plunge into civil war and government corruption. After increasing national support for independence and advancing revolutionaries forced the exit of the Portuguese government in 1975, the dominating party, a Soviet and Cuban backed socialist group called the MPLA declared itself the government. Rival factions, especially the US, Zambian and South African supported party, UNITA, led to further conflict and Angola essentially became a battleground for the cold war, with international weapons and money supporting their respective ideologies. The country's wealth in oil and diamonds was funnelled into the war machine, and the fighting lasted for 27 years, leaving behind an estimated 15 million buried landmines and 4 million internally displaced people. There has thankfully been a return toward peace and stability in Angola after the death of UNITA's leader in 2002 prompted a ceasefire. Though the fighting has ended, many people cannot return home to farm their land due the landmines, resulting in overcrowded cities. Those that do live in rural places are cut of from the rest of the country by lack of infrastructure, and have no way of accessing education or basic health care. The result is that one in four children die before age five, and the average Angolan lives 40 years.

I spent most of my time around Lubango, a city in Angola's southwest corner. Driving through its streets you can tell that it used to be a nice place with colourful Portuguese style houses and courtyards. You also realize as you try to swerve around potholes, seeing bombed out buildings and sidewalks dug up to expose electrical wires, what can happen when infrastructure is neglected for thirty years. Leaving the downtown core, which was originally built for 35 thousand people, you enter the *bairros*, or ghettos surrounding the city. This is where internally displaced people fled during the war, and are forced to remain. It is estimated that the population of Lubango and its surrounding area has reached about one million. You see hillsides covered with shacks of sticks and mud, covered with rough pieces of corrugated iron that are held down with bricks. While the downtown core often has running water and about six hours of electricity per day, people in the *bairros* sometimes have to walk several kilometres to access clean water and it is common to see kids bathing and playing in dirty city water. One quickly grows accustomed to seeing armed military officers at every intersection – I suppose it is an attempt to maintain order in a place where people are struggling to meet their basic needs. In contrast to the poverty of most people is the extreme wealth of a select few. Government buildings and homes of government and military officials are well maintained with high, razor topped walls and armed guards surrounding them. There is no question who is and who is not benefiting from the sale of Angola's natural resources.

The doctor I shadowed, Dr. S, was a general surgeon from Canada who was working through an evangelical Christian missionary agency. His commitment to the people of Angola is clear: he has been working there since 1978, through periods of the war in which internationals were ordered to leave the country. The country's only medical school in the capital, Luanda was not operational during most of the fighting, and has lost its Portuguese teaching staff. As a result, Angola has very few qualified doctors and even fewer surgeons. A number of Russian and Cuban doctors remain, but almost no one is willing to venture out of the cities to serve impoverished rural Angolans with no money and some of the most devastating manifestations of disease. Dr. S spent much of his time at a church operated rural clinic thirty kilometres to the south of the city, where people with very little money could afford to get treatment.


The rural clinic received donated equipment from hospitals in the West, which was always appreciated, but definitely substandard for those who know better. We would receive expired sutures, bent surgical instruments, broken operating lamps and partially functional endoscopes. Dr. S would improvise for lack of supplies with sterilized fishing line, or reuse "disposable" equipment. The clinic's OR was nothing more than a room with a concrete floor, screened windows and two operating tables. It was customary for me to walk around the room before surgery with a can of ShellTox to kill the flies. Dr. S' reputation has spread throughout the region, and people would travel long distances to find him. On arriving at the clinic, one sees crowds around the entrances. There are people sleeping in the parking area and campfires burning around the building while people cook for their recovering family members. Families camp there for weeks while they wait for consults, tests and surgery, raise money for their operation and perioperative care (usually by asking relatives or selling livestock) and find blood donors. Our morning objectives were to make up a list of operations and see any urgent cases. By afternoon we had to start operating, and were forced to turn people away. Ailments that Western doctors consider obsolete and easily preventable prevail in Angola. One sees tuberculosis spreading to bone, simple burns becoming life threatening skin cancers, polio paralysing children and malaria delaying patients from getting surgery.



In what seems to be a dire situation in Angola, many people have hope and joy. As I walked around on the streets of Lubango, strangers would come up to me with smiles and we would practice speaking each other's languages. They would tell me their career aspirations, and we would talk about our homelands. I remember spending one evening after a long day sitting in a schoolyard. A group of about twenty young children sang and danced for the couple of hours I sat there reading. Without electricity, shoes or toys (except a flat soccer ball) they didn't seem to have any problem having fun. In spite of all the things they lack, I wondered how much worse off these kids were than the ones back home who take food, toys and electricity for granted, spending their afternoons alone playing vids. <

The Vow of Nonviolence

BY JOHN DEAR
Dec 24, 2006

New Year's weekend brought three and a half feet of snow to the mesa high in the New Mexico desert where I live. So I've been sitting by a fire, trying to keep warm, reading and reflecting, enjoying the silence and solitude. New Year's is a good time for resolutions, but I think, given the world, we need more than resolutions, even good intentions--we need solemn, religious vows, a whole new commitment to God's way of peace and love.

Twenty five years ago, some friends and I professed a vow of nonviolence, as Gandhi did a hundred years ago. Not long afterwards, Pax Christi asked Eileen Egan and me to draft a vow, which they offered to Pax Christi members as a way to dedicate our lives to the Gospel path of nonviolence. Since then, tens of thousands have professed it.

Thinking about the world's violence, poverty, wars, and weapons, and enjoying the glorious snow covered desert scenery and distant mountains, I give thanks for that vow of nonviolence and the journey it opened up for me. I certainly am not perfectly nonviolent, but I have kept at the journey, and the older I get, the more I discover that the spiritual journey itself may be what counts most for it holds the greatest blessings.

I think Gandhi was right: the only solution to our personal, national and global violence is creative loving nonviolence. The greatest challenge facing us as individuals and as a race is to become people of creative nonviolence, which means from now on, we need to be nonviolent to our spouses, children, parents, relatives, neighbors, and everyone we meet, as well as nonviolent to ourselves, nonviolent in our work, nonviolent in our language, nonviolent in our politics and policies and attitudes toward humanity and creation itself.

This commitment requires daily meditation, ongoing study, Gospel-reading, community building, periodic training, and public action. Somehow, it means placing the God of peace at the center of our lives, as the goal of our common life journey, as the measure of all we do. If we can surrender ourselves completely, over and over again to the God of peace, we may find ourselves

walking the path of nonviolence and becoming instruments of peace. Nonviolence, then, becomes a way of life, a journey of peace to the God of peace.

My friend Gerard Vanderhaar, a long time Pax Christi activist, completed an excellent new book just before his death in 2005. “Personal Nonviolence: A Practice Spirituality for Peacemakers,” (published by www.paxchristiusa.org) helps me to see where I am on the journey of nonviolence, and how I can move from violence to nonviolence. His reflections on such every day topics as stress, anger, resentment, language, attitude, listening, leadership, driving, and bearing public witness for peace offer concrete ways toward growth and help me become a better person, more nonviolent.

As we begin a new year and start again the work to abolish war, poverty, and nuclear weapons, I thought I'd offer the original Pax Christi Vow of Nonviolence as a way to recommit ourselves to the nonviolent Jesus and his life of love and peace. It fits well within our long tradition of solemn, religious vows, and can be pronounced privately, in a local peace community, or at a parish liturgy. You can share it with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and parishioners. Some people read it every morning as a way to remind themselves that they are invited to walk a path of nonviolence.

If taken seriously, this vow can set us on a new course which will bring immeasurable blessings, perhaps even a lifetime commitment to peace, forgiveness, compassion and suffering love, a true, lifelong fidelity to the nonviolent Jesus.

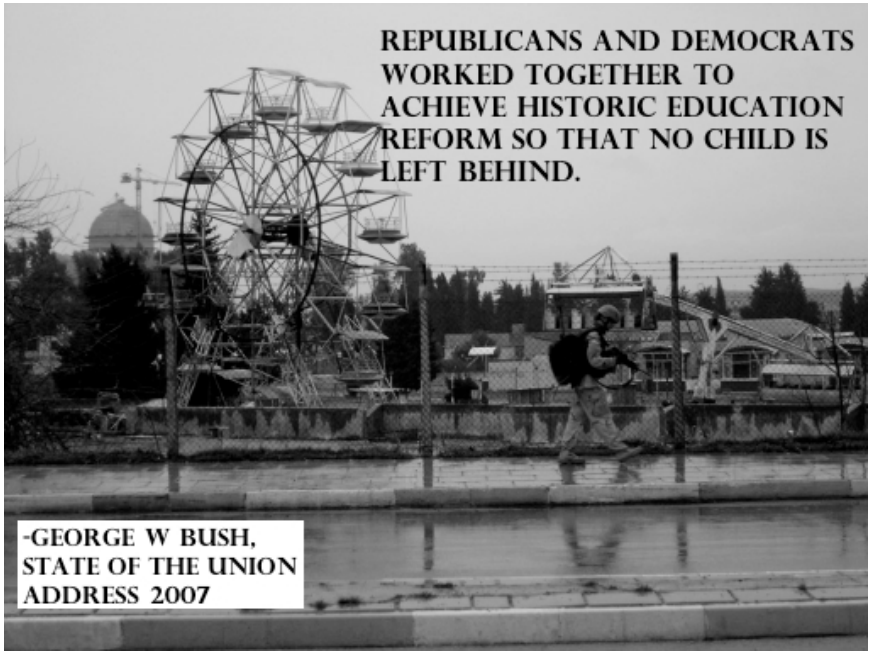
“Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount--

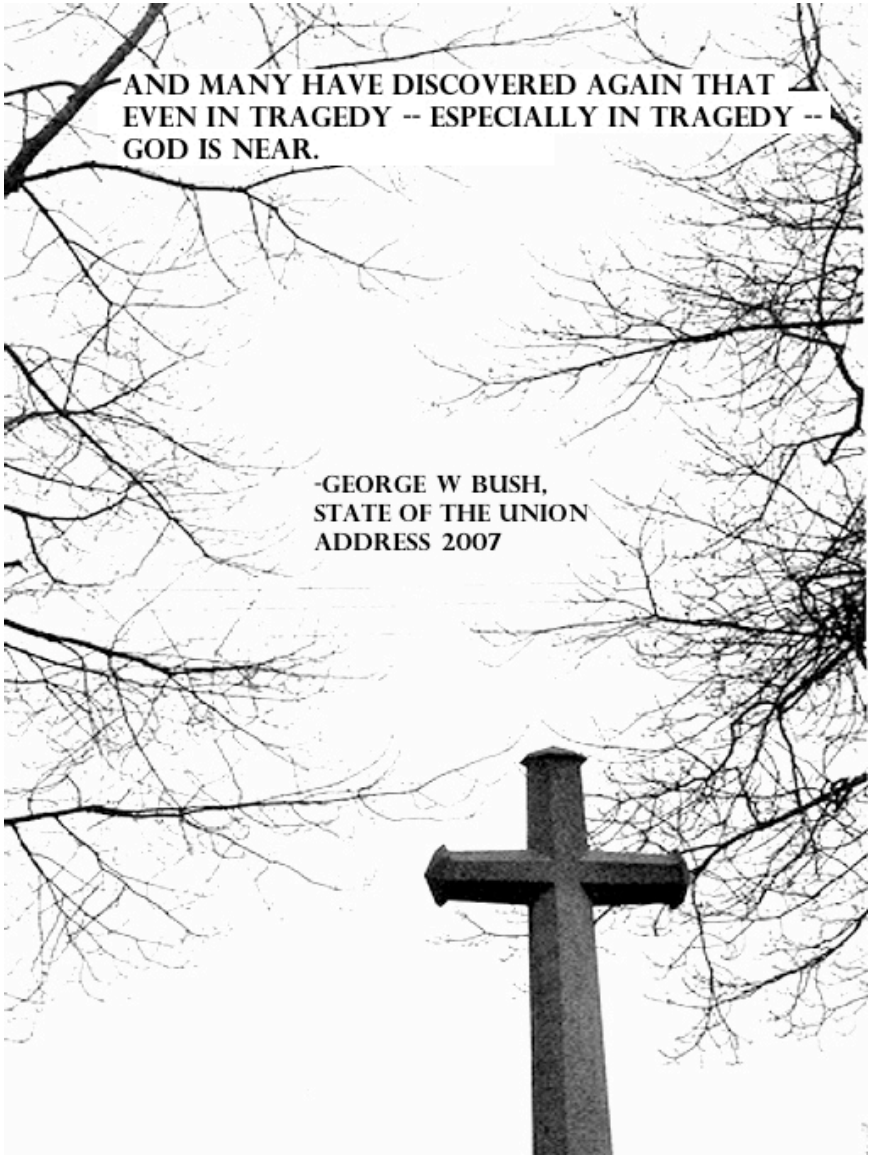
‘Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called the sons and daughters of God…. You have heard that it was said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be sons and daughters of your God in heaven.”

Before God the Creator and the Holy Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus

--by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;
--by accepting suffering in the struggle for justice rather than inflicting it;
--by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
--by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
--by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live or harm creation;
--by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.

God, I trust in your sustaining love and believe that just as you gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so you will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.” <


REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS WORKED TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE HISTORIC EDUCATION REFORM SO THAT NO CHILD IS LEFT BEHIND.
-GEORGE W BUSH, STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS 2007


AND MANY HAVE DISCOVERED AGAIN THAT
EVEN IN TRAGEDY -- ESPECIALLY IN TRAGEDY --
GOD IS NEAR.
-GEORGE W BUSH,
STATE OF THE UNION
ADDRESS 2007

The quote attributed to Mohandas Gandhi at the end of the essay titled *Out of the Cloisters and into the Streets* in last months issue was actually said by G.K Chesterton. "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried." - Chapter 5, What's Wrong With The World, 1910

The Vancouver Catholic Worker wants to expand.

When I started this zine a year ago it was my hope that I could make a tangible contribution to the Vancouver Catholic Worker community. Samaritan House (our house of hospitality) was full, and besides I had my own place and couldn't justify taking up a bed that might otherwise be used for someone who really needed it.

Samaritan House is still full and while this is a great blessing in many ways, it also means that maybe it's time for the community to grow as well. It has been my hope from the beginning that through this zine I might meet other likeminded and dedicated individuals who would help me to open a new house of hospitality. I have indeed been blessed with the acquaintance of some extraordinary people over the past year and knowing them has been an encouragement for me to write this appeal.

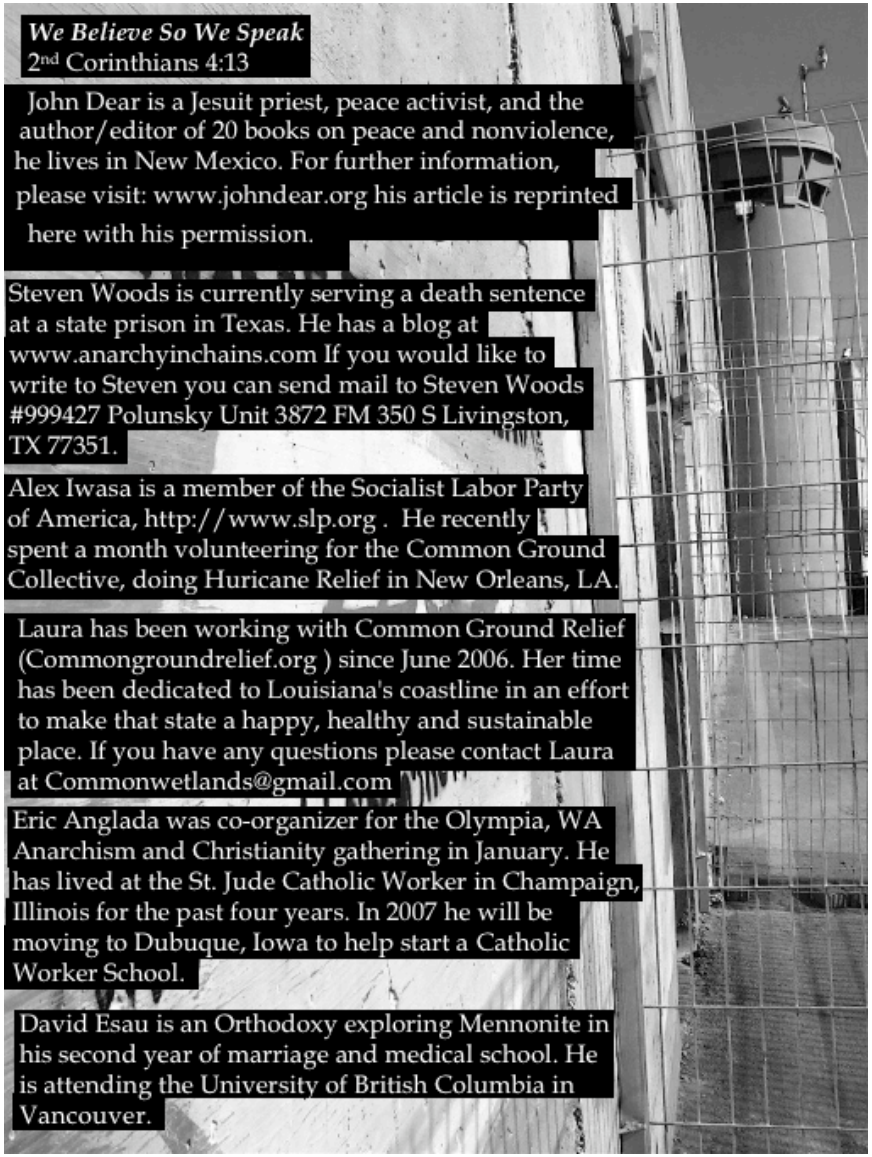
If you are interested and sincere and feel you would like to live in voluntary poverty and in service and solidarity with the poor, the mentally ill, and the homeless in Vancouver. If you are opposed to violence in all it's forms and if you feel that being a good Christian means more than just going into a building once a week to pray, and that discipleship is something that one is obliged to live fully and in humility then I would like to meet you, we might have things to discuss.

The Catholic Worker movement--though founded by Roman Catholics and rooted in the social teachings of the Catholic Church--has come to encompass a lot more you don't have to be a Catholic to be a Catholic Worker. It's not a top down organisation with a national or international HQ or anything like that, many people in the movement might consider themselves to be Anarchists, but that's not a requirement either, this movement has no party line and no agenda other than taking the gospel personally and trying to live it fully.

If you would like to learn more there are links on the back of this zine which can direct you to places you can get more information about the movement, and if you think this might be for you, please write to me at the.christian.radical.zine@gmail.com

I look forward to hearing from you and I pray that this might be the start of something wonderful.

In solidarity and in Christ,
Chris Rooney



We Believe So We Speak
2nd Corinthians 4:13

John Dear is a Jesuit priest, peace activist, and the author/editor of 20 books on peace and nonviolence, he lives in New Mexico. For further information, please visit: www.johndear.org his article is reprinted here with his permission.

Steven Woods is currently serving a death sentence at a state prison in Texas. He has a blog at www.anarchyinchains.com If you would like to write to Steven you can send mail to Steven Woods #999427 Polunsky Unit 3872 FM 350 S Livingston, TX 77351.

Alex Iwasa is a member of the Socialist Labor Party of America, http://www.slp.org . He recently spent a month volunteering for the Common Ground Collective, doing Huricane Relief in New Orleans, LA.

Laura has been working with Common Ground Relief (Commongroundrelief.org) since June 2006. Her time has been dedicated to Louisiana's coastline in an effort to make that state a happy, healthy and sustainable place. If you have any questions please contact Laura at Commonwetlands@gmail.com

Eric Anglada was co-organizer for the Olympia, WA Anarchism and Christianity gathering in January. He has lived at the St. Jude Catholic Worker in Champaign, Illinois for the past four years. In 2007 he will be moving to Dubuque, Iowa to help start a Catholic Worker School.

David Esau is an Orthodoxy exploring Mennonite in his second year of marriage and medical school. He is attending the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Karl Germyn , he presently lives in Vernon with his cat, Tom. He maintains a web log at **www.livejournal.com/users/rhykan**. He is co-editor of The Christian Radical.

Chris Rooney lives in Vancouver Canada. A member of the Catholic Worker movement, he is the other editor of The Christian Radical and maintains the zine's blog **www.thechristianradical.blogspot.com** He can be reached at **the.christian.radical.zine@gmail.com**

If you would like to support The Christian Radical there are lots of ways that you can; we always need new and original artwork and written content. We accept submissions any time at **the.christian.radical.zine@gmail.com**

You can subscribe to receive this zine, free as a PDF by writing to **the.christian.radical@gmail.com** if you would like to help print this zine in your own city you can get the printer friendly version e-mailed to you on request. You can also read news and original pieces of writing on our blog **www.thechristianradical.blogspot.com** or visit **www.vancouverdiy.com/christianradical.htm** to read some of our back issues.

Thank you for reading.
Chris Rooney, and Karl Germyn
Editors, The Christian Radical